



ONE HUNDRED
FIFTY YEARS

1790-1940

The Presbyterian Church
West Alexander, Pennsylvania

"ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS"

1790

One Hundred Fifty Years

The Presbyterian Church

West Alexander, Pennsylvania

1940

"RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A MIGHTY STREAM"

FOREWORD

This booklet is prepared at the direction of the committee on the celebration of One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of the organization of the Presbyterian Church at West Alexander, Pa., in order that an important milestone may be set up to mark this significant event. The purpose, therefore, is not so much to record some interesting items from history, but rather to present a picture of the church as it is in 1940, one hundred fifty years after the first pastor was installed.

Obviously, in the space agreed upon, a detailed history could not be included. However, the reader need not be disappointed for there are other accounts that include details of history not recorded here. Dr. W. H. Lester in 1890 wrote an account of the first hundred years. This history is to be found in many homes of the congregation today. In 1930, on the occasion of the one hundred fortieth anniversary, Miss Essie Lester, a daughter of Dr. W. H. Lester, wrote an historical sketch, reviewing the earlier work and adding materials to bring the history up to date. This booklet is also available and is distributed widely in the congregation. Interested persons may go still further into the history of this historic church by studying the Presbyterian records available in libraries. The History of Old Redstone, The History of the Presbytery of Washington, The Minutes of the General Assembly, as well as Minutes of the Synod of Virginia and of Pennsylvania. Then too, there are historical novels of note such as "The Latimers" and the account of the Scotch-Irish in America, by Dinsmore, together with State and County histories, which richly reward the reader who is interested in the story of the Presbyterian Church in America.

We believe that the great mission of this pioneer church is not yet fulfilled. Many great and good men and women have labored here to make straight the highway of the King. This celebration will accomplish its purpose if it will serve in any way to direct and inspire this present generation to establish the glorious gospel of the past years in the present age and in ages to come.



R. E. KAUFMAN, Pastor

**NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF THE WEST ALEXANDER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

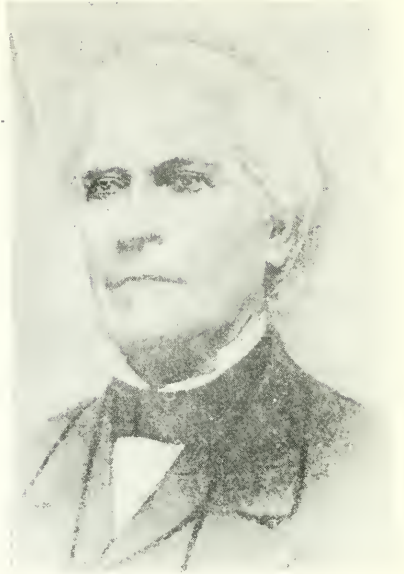
As early as 1773, one Archibald Narrigan, marked land for improvement to be taken up by John McPherrin and James Slater. These two men with five others divided up a large area in the district now embracing the town of West Alexander. The tops of the ridges were followed in running the lines between the farms and it was agreed that in case of dispute two of the number should be appointed to settle it. It was a line dispute that caused James Slater in 1790 to object to the ordination of John McPherrin as the first ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church. A few years later when the introduction of Watt's version of the Psalms divided the congregation, the McPherrins generally remained in the original congregation, while the Slaters were found in the Associate congregation. The church division, however, was about as amicable as any division can possibly be and all property matters were settled in a Christian manner.

The early settlers were Scotch-Irish who, unlike many other immigrants always tried to settle an area as a group. The German immigrants as well as the Irish and the English often did not care who they had for a neighbor. Their chief interest was usually economic. But the Scotch-Irish settled in groups. It is this fact that made possible many of the early churches. One religious family in a frontier settlement can not very well build a church; but a dozen God fearing families in the same region can and will have a house of worship. So it was in this region called Three Ridges. As early as 1785 worship and preaching is recorded, and two years before the first pastor was installed a house of worship stood at Three Ridges, and occasional preaching was heard.

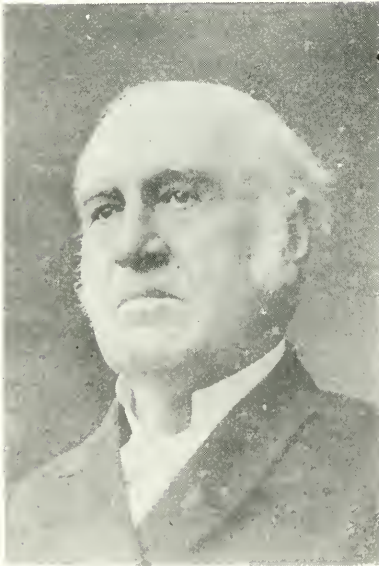
One of the economic difficulties that beset the first families of the region was the matter of land titles. Since two States claimed sovereignty, land titles were often very tricky. The state line was not run till 1793, and people who lived in these parts prior to that time did not know to which state they owed allegiance. The western terminus of the Mason-Dixon line was not fixed till 1784. Since it was to be five degrees west of the Delaware River, it was a nice problem in mathematics to find the exact spot. The most eminently scientific men of the age were employed. These men, by astronomical observations over a period of six weeks, finally found the correct latitude and longitude and fixed the point. Meanwhile the state of Virginia had claimed all the land west of the forks of the Ohio, as it was claimed that five degrees west of the Delaware did not extend beyond that point. Three counties were set up: Monongalia, Ohio, and Yohogania. Before 1793 many believed that the area around Three Ridges surely belonged to Virginia. Some early references to religious work here are therefore found in the records of the Synod of Virginia. Later, when the lines were established, Virginia gave up her claims, reluctantly withal, and the county of Monongalia, and that of Yohogania,



JOSEPH STEVENSON



JOHN McCLUSKEY, D.D.



WILLIAM HAVENS LESTER, D.D.



GRANT E. FISHER, D.D.

disappeared. Ohio county carried its name at last into the state of West Virginia.

The Presbytery of Redstone first met Sept. 19, 1781, just thirty days before Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown. It met at Pidgeon Creek where this first Presbytery west of the mountains was organized. John McMillan was the leading figure in its organization. The churches at Chartiers, Pidgeon Creek, Cross Creek and Upper Buffalo were already organized and together formed the first Presbytery. Besides these churches there were doubtless many "preaching points." As early as 1785 Three Ridges is mentioned as one of these points. Doubtless John McMillan preached here on several occasions prior to the organization of the church.

In October 1785 Presbytery records show that "Supplication for supplies from Three Ridges were brought and read." James Finley and Thaddeus Dodd were appointed to preach in November and February respectively. From that time to the settlement of Mr. Brice supplies were sent on occasion but preaching was neither regular nor frequent.

JOHN BRICE'S PASTORATE, 1790-1808

Mr. John Brice, the first pastor of the congregation, was ordained and installed April 22, 1790, Thaddeus Dodd, John McMillan and James Finley being principals in the service. This, therefore, is the beginning of the church organization. On the 17th of August that year the first session was constituted at Three Ridges. At the request of Mr. Brice, Dr. McMillan, with elders from his churches, came to perform this duty. He brought Elder Patrick McCollam from Pidgeon Creek and Elder Josiah Scott from Chartiers. Also Elders William Smiley and James Brice came from Upper Buffalo. This session, with McMillan as moderator, was asked to approve the ordination of the members of the first session at Three Ridges. The first name brought up was that of John McPherrin. James Slater registered objection. After due consideration, however, Mr. McPherrin was considered worthy of ordination. There is no record of the election of this first session, but doubtless these men were elected by the congregation early in the year 1790, when their pastor was installed. Mr. McPherrin, with Mr. John Maxwell, Mr. John Waits, and Mr. John Faris and the pastor, John Brice, was the first session.

The early session records, which are well preserved in a hand made leather bound book, are however very meager, consisting chiefly of records of cases brought before the session for trial. For years no mention is made of the examination of persons who desired to unite with the church. There must have been accessions from time to time, however, as the church grew slowly but surely through those early years. The original charter membership cannot be determined but the list of subscribers to the payment of the forty dollars to the Associate Congregation in 1795 includes forty-six names, all heads of families. This would allow the conservative



HARRY A. RIDDLE, D.D.



GLENN M. CRAWFORD, D.D.



G. KARL MONROE

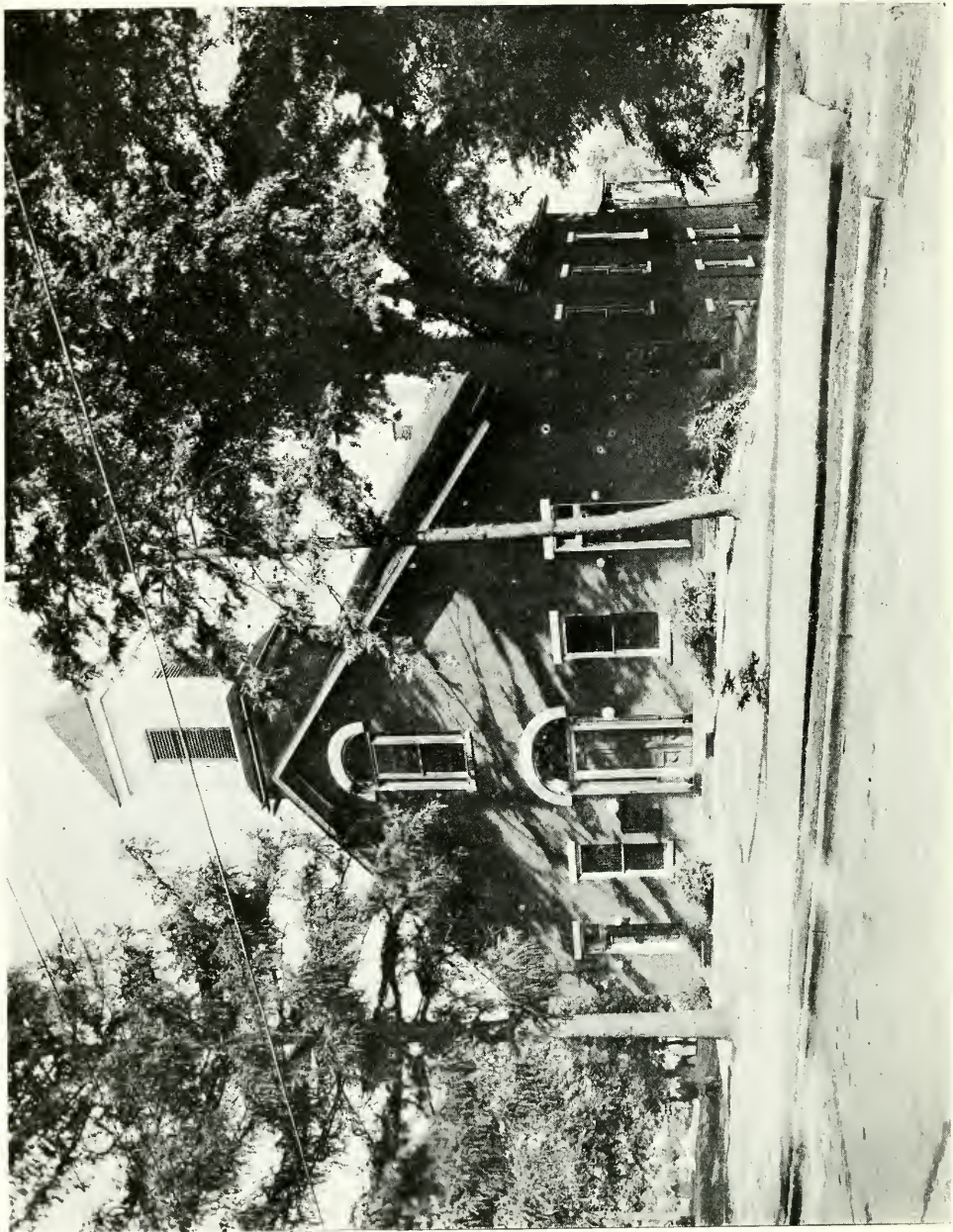
estimate that there must have been about 100 members when the congregation was organized. The bounds of the congregation extended on the north to West Liberty, south to what is now West Union, west to the Forks of Wheeling, and east to the limits of Washington.

In 1794-95 a division arose in the church from a difference of opinion regarding singing. Watt's version of the Psalms was introduced by Rev. John Brice. Those who were conscientiously opposed to the use of "human composition" in the services of the sanctuary rose from their seats and left the house of worship. They formed the Associate Congregation. The descendants of the first members of this church are in the United Presbyterian Church of West Alexander today.

When John Brice was ordained and installed the General Assembly was just one year old, modeled after the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and consisting of the Synods of New York and New Jersey, Synods of Philadelphia, of Virginia, and of Carolina. The Synod of Virginia extended north to include this area of Mr. Brice's labors. So that a somewhat inchoate church situation as well as that of the land and State authority contributed to the confusion of the early organization. Not to mention the well known pioneer problems of Indian fighting and the difficulty of securing necessary supplies from across the mountains. But through all these difficulties the church lived on and gradually increased in strength.

Church discipline was the main subject before the early meetings of the session. "Attending the sealing ordinances" was especially emphasized. Members who persistently neglected the ordinances of the church were cited to appear before the session and show reason for "Contumaceously absenting themselves from the preaching services." The sacredness of the Sabbath day was zealously upheld by the session. A charge of Sabbath desecration was once brought against a member who was observed to make certain preparations on Sabbath evening for butchering of hogs which he expected to do early Monday morning. The member professed sorrow for his sin and promised to lead a more exemplary Christian life in the future. The utmost care was used on the part of the session to pronounce careful and just judgment. In most cases the judgment of the session was accepted.

The usual judgment pronounced against a guilty party was "Suspension from the sealing ordinances of the church until properly repentant." A further light on the times around the year 1800 is shown by a long minute in the session record on the "sin of promiscuous dancing." This "deliverance" was read before the congregation. The sin of drunkenness was also very common. Once in 1804 the session met in Wheeling to try a case of drunkenness that happened there. The serious manner in which these offenses were considered is apparent when we realize that the



difficulty of travel in those days, and the rigors of an unusually hard winter, did not deter a church session from making this trip to serve the church they loved and whose authority they respected.

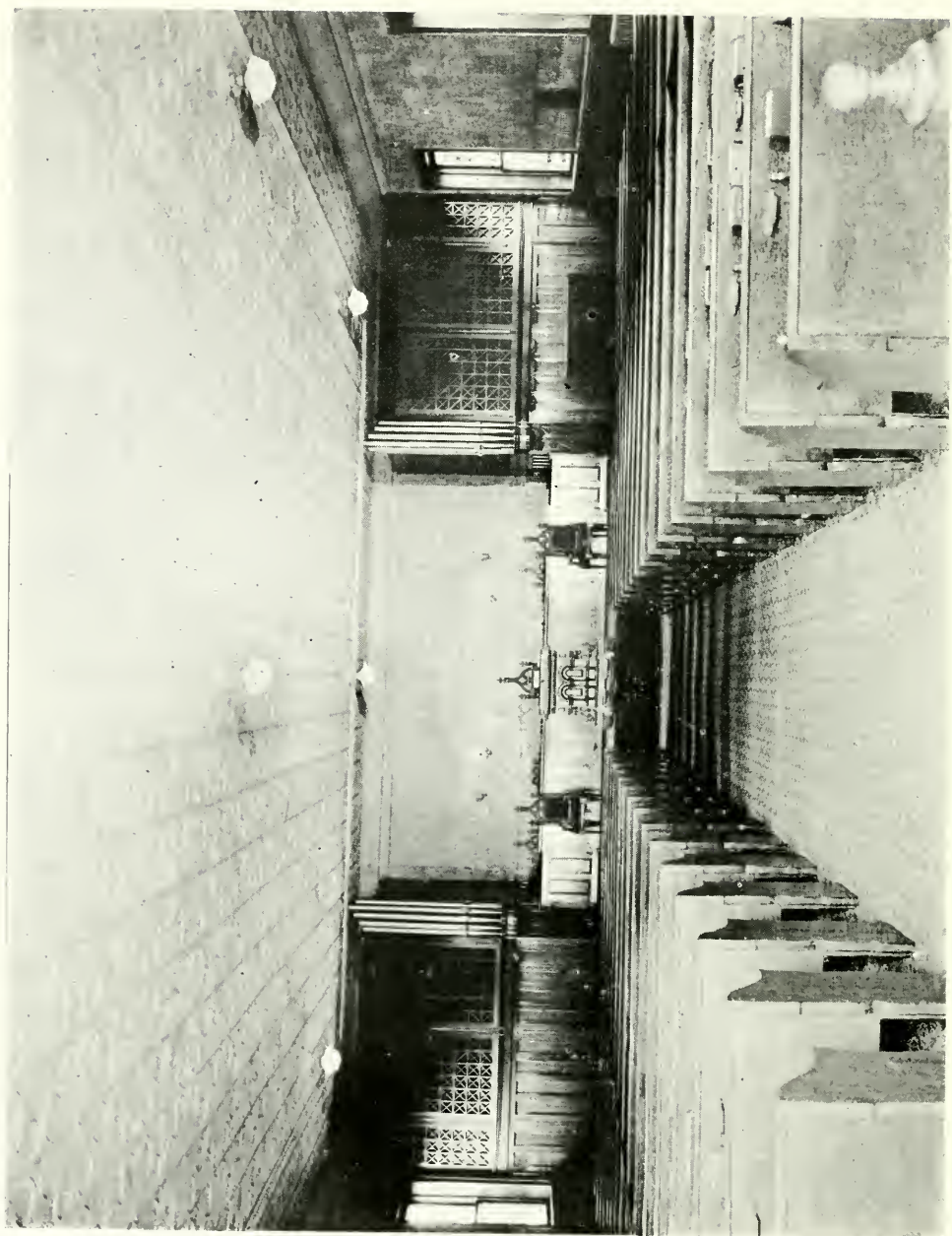
John Brice resigned the pastorate in June 1808, went to Greene county where he preached for three years in what is now the Unity Church. He died in 1811. His grave is near by in the old grave yard. He was twice married. His first wife was Rebecca Kerr, of the Kerr family of Cross Creek, Pa. To that union were born two children, one boy and one girl. His second wife, whom he married in 1795, was Jean, daughter of Robert Stockton, and aunt of Rev. John Stockton. To this union nine children were born, eight daughters and one son. The names of McCoy, Reed, Craig, and Blayney are connected to the name of John Brice through the marriage of his children.

JOSEPH STEVENSON'S PASTORATE, 1809-1825

Joseph Stevenson was born March 5, 1779. His father died when Joseph was yet a child and his mother married Judge James Edgar, eminent jurist in Washington County Court for many years and a very remarkable elder of the Cross Creek Presbyterian Church. Mr. Stevenson was brought up, therefore, in one of the finest homes in Western Pennsylvania. He was converted in young manhood under the preaching of Rev. Thomas Hughes, under whom he also received his classical education. This was the minister who later established a subscription school in Ohio and enrolled as a student Wm. Holmes McGuffey, the famous author of the McGuffey Eclectic Readers. Joseph Stevenson received his theological education at Canonsburg under Dr. Dunlap. In 1809, in June, he was installed over the two congregations of Three Ridges and Forks of Wheeling.

When he began the pastorate Three Ridges reported 93 members. The first year he received seven new members, bringing the membership to 100 in 1810. In 1811 there were 105 members. In 1812 we read in the record: "The session after a lengthy conversation on our circumstance as a congregation did agree to set apart the last Thursday of this month (Jan. 27) as a day of fasting and prayer because the influences of the Spirit are withheld from us." Ten new members were received that year but there were losses too, so the membership stood at 110. The same year Three Ridges congregation asked for the full time of their pastor and accordingly Mr. Stevenson gave up the work at Forks of Wheeling. Three Ridges agreed to pay a salary of \$320. Also in 1812 four new elders were ordained and three years later the church was regularly incorporated under the name of the Three Ridges Congregation of Washington County, Pennsylvania.

In December, 1819, a Methodist preacher was holding meetings in the home of one Mr. Smith in the village. A Presbyterian who attended the meeting was reported to have acted in an unchristian manner, bringing himself in disrepute as a member of a church



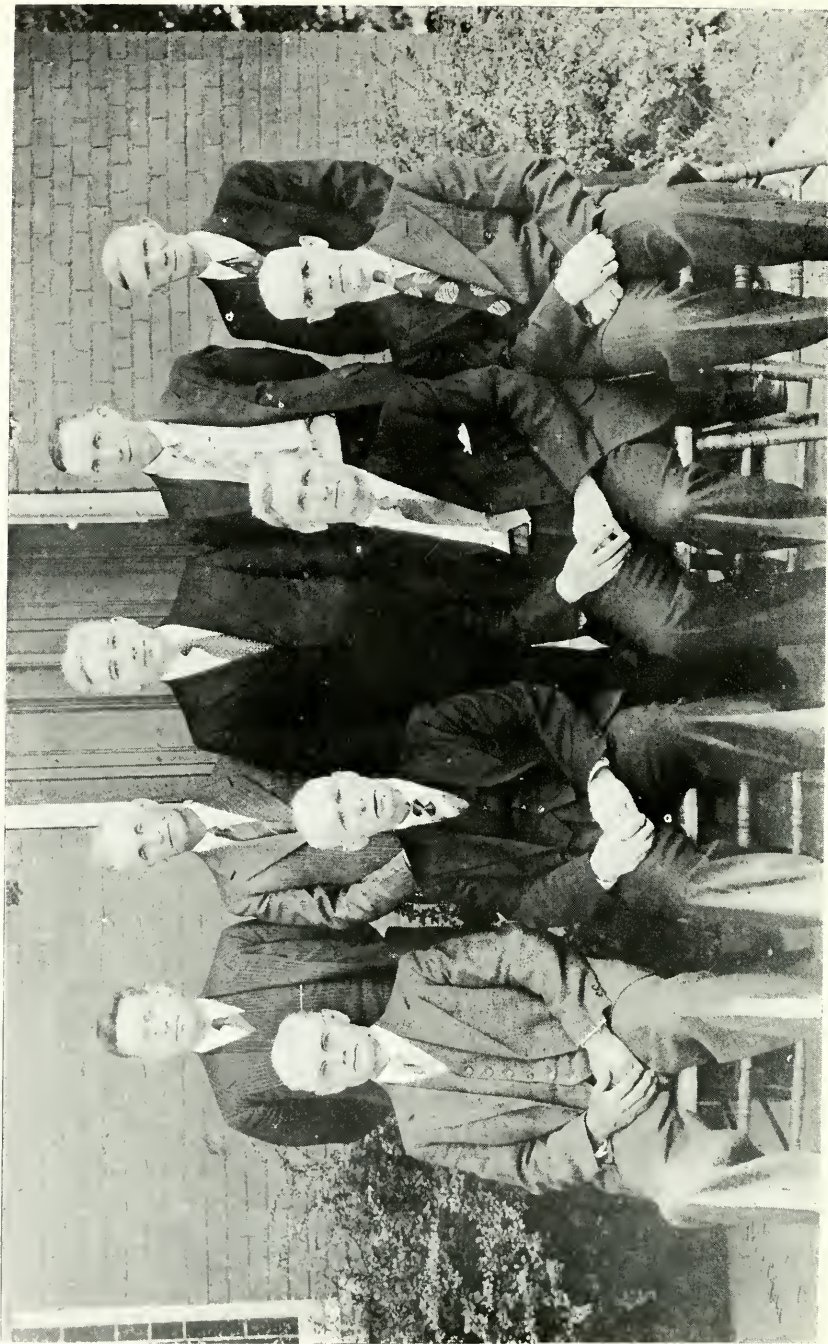
and also embarrassing a preacher of the gospel. The session decided the case was so notorious that it must be looked into. The trial of this case occupies several pages in the records of the session. Much testimony was received and recorded, among which we find the interesting observation on the part of the member of Mr. Stevenson's church that he was surprised to find such a large congregation assembled to hear a Methodist preacher, especially females. He also asked the divine whether he received any pay, and added, with a touch of ecclesiastical pride, that he paid his preacher five dollars.

However, through all the years of Mr. Stevenson's pastorate the church grew steadily. Notations in the records of the session show the growth. From 110 reported in 1813 we see the following figures showing the advance through the years: 112, 116, 122, 137 (1819), 148, 150 in 1821.

There are also notations showing that catechetical instruction was carried on in some systematic way. It appears that regular catechetical instruction was given at the homes of the Elders. There is a list of references which run as follows: "At Mr. Bonars, 'What is effectual calling?' at Mr. Findlays, 'What is prayer?' at Mr. Maxwells, 'What is justification?'" These notations run from the year 1810 to 1821.

In 1819 Thos. Yates and William Hervey became members of the session but there is no record of their ordination. These names are well known today. This man, Wm. Hervey, was the grandfather of Doctor Hervey and his sister, Mrs. Mary Hervey Black, who have established a home in recent years in West Alexander, where years before many of their ancestors were leaders in the church. Elder Maxwell who was ordained in 1813 was a grandfather of the Herveys on the mother's side. Since 1819 two other Herveys were members of the session: Henry, ordained in 1847, and John C., ordained 1858. Other family names also carry down through the years. It is a great tradition. Unbroken lines of church families today come down from those early settlers. Our fathers built this church and they built well.

In the closing years of Mr. Stevenson's pastorate the organization of neighboring churches drew heavily from the membership of the congregation. A church was organized at Claysville and one at West Union. This development not only depleted the parent congregation, but was also at least a secondary reason for some strife and unpleasantness within the congregation. From 1820 to 1825 three or four lengthy church trials occupied the attention of the session. In some cases, when the pastor was involved in some way, he asked a neighbor pastor to moderate the meetings of the session. Rev. John Rea, Rev. Thomas Hoge, Rev. Wm. Wylie, and others were called in on occasion to take charge of the session meetings. Rev. Jos. Stevenson was a man of peace. In a wise and patient manner he guided the destinies of the church



THE SESSION:

John Bullard
D. W. Coffield

W. H. Hutchison
Carson Blayney

R. E. Kaufman
T. E. Egan
(Absent, J. Elmer Gray)

Ralph McCleery

John Hunter
W. E. Stoolfire

through the troubled years. The new church which was proposed in 1818 was slow at becoming a reality. Mr. Stevenson himself dearly desired this new church, and had the disappointment of seeing the possibility of building a church fade away, as new organizations began in nearby fields. The new church was not talked of again until after Mr. Stevenson moved to Ohio, where he did a great work at Belfontaine. After his removal in 1825 the church continued to feel the drag of the newly organized churches upon the membership. Being without a pastor the congregation tended to scatter. For three years the descent continued. From a high peak in 1821 the church entered a new low period in 1826-1827. Then came Dr. John McCluskey.

JOHN McCLUSKEY'S PASTORATE, 1828-1854

Mr. McCluskey took charge of the congregation on Oct. 7, 1828. He found a people anxious to respond to a preacher, teacher, and pastor again. He rallied the scattered flock. Before two years had elapsed he received 93 new members. Judicial cases which had occupied so much of the time of the church session in the 1820's suddenly disappear under the impact of a revival of religion. At this time many of the newer names are seen on the church roll of members. Among the names are: Thompson, Rogers, Sutherland, Black, McDonald, Whittam, Wallace, Blayney, Templeton, Brice, Bell, McCleery, Yates, Anderson, Guy, and Snodgrass.

By the year 1832, however, many charges were again presented to the session for investigation and judgment. A gradual change in attitude toward erring members began to manifest itself. No longer was the testimony of the witnesses inscribed in the record, only the judgment of the session. The Presbytery of Washington meeting in Wheeling in 1834 approved the record except in one case where the session had allowed two members to withdraw from the communion of the church. However, at nearly every meeting of the session members were received. In 1835 a revival of interest came and there were 100 accessions to the church. Mr. McCluskey was a community builder, his influence was felt in all phases of character development.

As one reads the early history the impression as to the seriousness of church membership is deepened. Church attendance was certainly stressed as a mark of Christian faithfulness. A little over a hundred years ago two notable cases were brought before the session. The charge in each case was: "They had entirely neglected the sealing ordinances of the church." After every possible means to secure faithfulness was exhausted, the parties were "cited to appear before session." One of the four was less delinquent than the others, and he a doctor of medicine. When questioned he immediately replied that he would gladly attend regularly were it not for professional duties. His case was at once dismissed. His wife, however, was not prepared to answer the charge at the time and asked for a few days to consider. Later she sent



ELDERS:

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| John Bullard | John Chaney | Ralph McCleery | T. E. Egan | W. E. Stooffire |
| John Hunter | W. H. Hutchison | D. W. Coffield | W. R. Hamilton | Corson Blayney |
| W. W. Armstrong | R. D. McCleery | Carson Reed | R. G. Buchanan | F. W. Moore |
| (Absent. Robt. J. Hunter, | J. Roy Sutherland, | John Hanna, | J. Ebmer Gray, | John M. Gibson, |
| H. L. McCammon, | R. J. McCleery) | | | |

a note to the session, "I am led to believe it my duty to absent myself from Mr. McCluskey's preaching, it being unprofitable for me." The excuse was not accepted by the session. The case dragged on for some time and the doctor's wife finally escaped the judgment of the session by bringing in an elder from the West Liberty church who testified that she had never taken her letter from that church, and, therefore, was not under the jurisdiction of the session of the Three Ridges Congregation.

In 1833 Thos. Maxwell, long an elder and faithful in the performance of his duties presented his resignation to the session. He stated his reason as being unable to cooperate with two other members of the session to the edification of the church. The session attempted to remove the difficulties but upon failing to do so, accepted the resignation of Mr. Maxwell. Two years later the two members with whom he could not agree were given letters of dismissal at their own request. No reason was assigned. This kind of activity indicates that the church has had its problems through the years..

But in order to be fair both sides of history must be shown. In 1841 the session received a very affectionate letter from elder John Miller that shows the true temper of a church court. Mr. Miller had moved some distance from West Alexander and so could no longer attend the church here. He asked to be dismissed to West Union, and then added in his letter words of high esteem for the session and pastor, revealing the the devout spirit of a man who held sacred, the office of ruling elder, an office which no one could lightly lay aside. He also expressed his deep love for the church. "There were giants in those days."

Mr. McCluskey knew the community and its needs. In 1848 a duly appointed committee divided the congregation into districts, placing an elder in charge of each district. Instructions were as follows: At each meeting the elders were to report on the number of families, the communicants, the families who had family worship and those who had not, those under fifteen who did not attend Sabbath school, the members of the Temperance Society and the state of that cause, and the general state of morals and religion. In addition the elder in his district was to conduct a weekly or monthly prayer meeting, visit the sick, and assume general oversight of spiritual matters.

Three years before, the Genreal Assembly ruled that a slave holder might remain in the communion of the church. This brought into sharper relief the rising storm clouds of slavery. In April, 1848 a long memorial was presented to the session asking for immediate action on the slavery issue. At the last service of the April communion season that year which was on Monday, April 16, the reply of the session was read before the congregation. A sad division resulted. Those who withdrew formed the Free Presbyterian Church which continued until after the Civil War when, the question

WEST ALEXANDER
 PRESBYTERIAN
 CHURCH
 FOUNDATION 1850
 111 KAUFMAN BLVD
 HOUSE OF WORSHIP
 MON. 5:00 P.M.
 WED. 8:00 P.M.
 SAT. 10:00 P.M.
 WEDNESDAY
 PRAYER PALLET MEETING
 6:00 P.M.
 WELCOME TO ALL



MISSIONARY LEADERS

Margaret Moore, Mrs. Ruth Bullard, Mrs. Margaret Donley, Mrs. Pearl Vermillion, Mary Martha Chalfant and Lorena Reed
 Mrs. Fern Sprowls., Miss Essie Lester, Mrs. Lucille Chalfant, Mrs. Jane B. Yates, Mrs., Jessie McCleery, Mrs. Olive Hendershot, Mrs. Adda Gibson

of slavery being resolved, some of them came back into the old congregation.

During those years of the decades a century ago the church choir no doubt had its useful work in do. In 1850 we notice that elders John McDonald and Wm. Hervey were appointed to confer with the Choir of the church with the view of having a sufficient number of persons in the choir to aid them in their important work. These elders were likely interested particularly in the music of the sanctuary.

The manner of dealing with members who were neglecting the services of the church, or guilty of conduct unbecoming a Christian, was still further modified. If such a person was known to "common fame," the name nevertheless was not placed in the record. Usually when the session heard of such a case a member was appointed to confer with "one of our members who is neglecting the ordinances of the church" or "one of the members who is reported as acting in an unbecoming manner" to the end that he may be persuaded to be more faithful. Usually the report of the visiting elder was accepted and except for rare occasions persons were not cited to appear. The ends of discipline were kept in mind and unnecessary publicity and trial were kept in the background.

Mr. McCluskey was interested in education. There was need of a school to help students prepare for larger usefulness. So the Academy was established and was chartered in 1840. Many students graduating from this school entered the Christian ministry, so the influence of Dr. McCluskey extended at last far beyond the bounds of his parish. His work was well done. He resigned the pastorate in 1854, then a year was spent in the employ of the Board of Education. He supplied churches in the East and was associated with various schools till his death at the age of 85. "In the minutes of the session in the year 1880 is recorded an affectionate and beautiful minute on the death of Dr. John McCluskey."

WILLIAM HAVENS LESTER'S PASTORATE, 1854-1900

William Havens Lester, just out of Princeton Seminary in the Spring of 1854 was called to the pastorate. He came to a church divided on the issue of slavery; and, because of emigration to the west, burdened with the problem of continuance. The Academy which had flourished under Dr. McCluskey was in a state of vast depression. The outlook was far from bright, but Dr. Lester had the courage and devotion necessary for the occasion and in the first year 70 converts were added to the sadly depleted roll. The membership before the division of 1848 must have been approximately 250. Before many years had gone by in Dr. Lester's pastorate the membership was built up to that point again.

It is noticeable that the minutes of the session record chiefly the examination of candidates for membership. Disciplinary measures are mentioned very briefly. A usual item runs: "A committee was appointed to inquire into reports affecting the

character of one of the members," and later: "the report was received and the committee discharged."

In 1858 a gracious revival visited the church and sixty were received. Then the Civil War came and feeling ran high; and, as the War went on, spiritual tides advanced and receded. After the war the evidence of lowered moral and religious life is seen in the records. In 1865 and 1866 there was a falling away. Church attendance fell off and instances of "conduct unbecoming a Christian" were brought before the session. In 1866 Presbytery arranged that each church hold "Protracted Meetings." Such a meeting was held in the West Alexander Church. Of it, Dr. Lester wrote: "The services were well attended. A deep solemnity prevailed the people and a few were gathered in—but only a few in a dry and thirsty land."

But the tide came in again. In 1869 there were 62 accessions. Just before that a committee from the congregation was instructed to purchase "communion vessels and a plate for the congregation." At about the same time the congregation was divided into five districts, the elders to hold prayer meetings in each district.

In February, 1875, we find this in the minutes written by Dr. Lester: "It may not be improper to record that the communion was one of especial solemn interest. The Spirit of the Lord was with us and it was deemed best to continue the meetings after communion." There were 64 members received on confession of faith at the following communion. The revival spirit was abroad in the land. Moody and Sankey had just returned from their amazing campaign in England. And the Moody and Sankey revivals were springing up here and there as this great team of gospel messengers began their work in this country. Dr. Lester mentions the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit and that many of the new members came into the church through the Sunday School. During the next few years there were many accessions.

In 1876, by vote of the congregation, the "Hymnal" was adopted as "the book of Praise." This was likely the "Presbyterian Hymnal" recognized as official by the General Assembly following the Reunion of Old School and New School in 1870. By this time the church had made the final break with metrical psalmody. The transition was sufficiently gradual after the first break that divided the church in 1795. Hymn books were supplied but not absolutely necessary as in early times the hymn was 'lined out' by a clerk or leader who usually sat in front just under the pulpit. His position was one of dignity and second only to the minister. In early congregational singing all sang the "air." Gradually other parts were introduced. The first psalm books had only ten or twelve tunes. Sometimes the clerk had the notes written in the back of his book.

The revivals of the last quarter of the century did much to influence the singing of the congregations in America. Gospel

songs were introduced and the singing school flourished. Emigrants from New England passing through the settlements had among them skilled musicians who introduced new tunes, especially a wonderful variety of tune called a fugue. After the four parts had passed together over the first two lines of a stanza, they separated, leading off one after another, each singing for itself and yet managing to come out together. These fancy tunes became immensely popular. A great favorite was: "When Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night." This kind of tune has now disappeared.

The change to the use of books for everyone in the congregation was accomplished in the long pastorate of Dr. Lester. In many Presbyterian churches the use of books for singing did not meet with universal favor. Some people left the church when "lining out" was discontinued.

The period after 1870 was also a period of great missionary advance. In these years several missionary organizations were organized and the giving of the church to benevolent projects was more carefully organized.

Youth problems also vexed the church. Once in a period when the young people seemed to be leaving the community to seek a place in life elsewhere, the pastor reflected on the virtue of keeping the old home church strong. Social problems demanded attention. In 1881 the session prepared a long deliverance on the subject of "promiscuous dancing," which the pastor read before the congregation. For some years young people seeking admission into the church were required to promise to refrain from dancing. One of the reasons for the forming of the Rural Mite Society at that time was to help the young people in their social life.

In 1888 the Auditors report showed the church was indebted to Dr. Lester to the extent of \$332. As there was much more than that sum back in pew rents, the trustees were directed to collect the rents and pay the pastor.

Early in 1894 there was a revival of interest and some thirty were added to the church. Dr. Lester seemed very much pleased and wrote: "There was a longing for a revival and the Spirit came to us—many were hopefully converted and added to the church." That year he completed his fortieth year as pastor and the Presbytery at the meeting in December marked the occasion with fitting exercises. Joel Truesdale, of the session, read the appropriate resolutions of the congregation. Gifts were given the pastor.

During the later years of the century the week of prayer was always greatly stressed and often productive of much spiritual good.

The practice of the church from its organization was to stand in divine services during the prayers and to sit during the other parts of the service. Finally it came about that the practice was



TRUSTEES:

Roy Gashel.

Wray Guess

Arch H. Bullard,

(Absent, James McMurray, O. G. Masteller)

W. E. Stoolfire

C. O. Chalfant,

Willard Harris

only partially observed, and most of the congregation remained sitting during the prayer time. This situation was finally brought before the session by a long suffering and patient pastor. No doubt the prayers were long enough, but if the people could not join with one accord in the exercises then something should be done. Accordingly it was agreed that (1897) they would stand for the second and last hymn and for the invocation and benediction and remain seated for the rest of the service.

In 1900 Dr. Lester by reason of age and physical inability to do the work necessary to the congregation resigned. He was made pastor emeritus until his death which occurred in 1912.

All through his long pastorate the records attest his devotion to the cause of Christ. Time after time brief references show how the spiritual condition of the people weighed on his heart and mind. Then when the church experienced a season of revival under his labors he recorded his joy and satisfaction. His influence was felt far and wide and consistently in the direction of righteousness.

Dr. Lester was married just before he came to the pastorate. His wife was Elizabeth Hand, a graduate of Mt. Holyoke, having had Mary Lyon as one of her teachers. Through the long years Mrs. Lester was a wonderful help, and though long an invalid, yet with patient faithfulness she exerted a powerful influence for good. When she passed away in 1898 at the age of 69 years, it was felt that a great loss was sustained by the congregation and pastor. Many beautiful tributes were paid to her memory.

Mrs. Elizabeth Lester was above all a missionary minded woman. She had good success in organizing societies for the purpose of establishing the principles and precepts of the gospel in the church and in far lands. She organized the Hold-The-Fort-Band. For many years she was Corresponding Secretary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbytery of Washington, which society she helped to organize. When failing health made her an invalid she kept up an effective work by writing letters in behalf of the organization. The return letters made up her report at the annual meeting. She truly exalted Christ and endeared herself to all who had the privilege of meeting her and working with her. Her example was a benediction and an inspiration to the church. Her daughter, Miss Essie Lester, continues active in the congregation, and by her faithfulness has rendered still more imperishable the spiritual influence of a ministry that now extends to nearly ninety years since Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Lester came to West Alexander.

GRANT E. FISHER'S PASTORATE, 1900-1909

Dr. Fisher was elected by a congregation that was not accustomed to voting for a pastor. Not many of those who voted for the pastor in 1854 remained. (When Dr. John Stockton retired in 1877 from his fifty-year pastorate at Cross Creek, he gave as one of his reasons the fact that the congregation he was serving



THE WILLING WORKERS

Dickinson, Hutchison, Hunter, Murray, Hendershot, Davis, Donley, Hamilton, Bell, Gibson, Moore, McKenzie, Harris, Ballard, Craver Spragg, Kaufman, Chalfant, Martin, Hunter, Ely, Gillillou, Egan, Blayney, Guess, Stout, Craig, Vermillion, Dunlap, Yates, Edgar, Forney, Moore, Black, Lester, Babcock, Blayney, McKain, Chalfant, McCleery, Jones, Chaney, Armstrong, Reed.

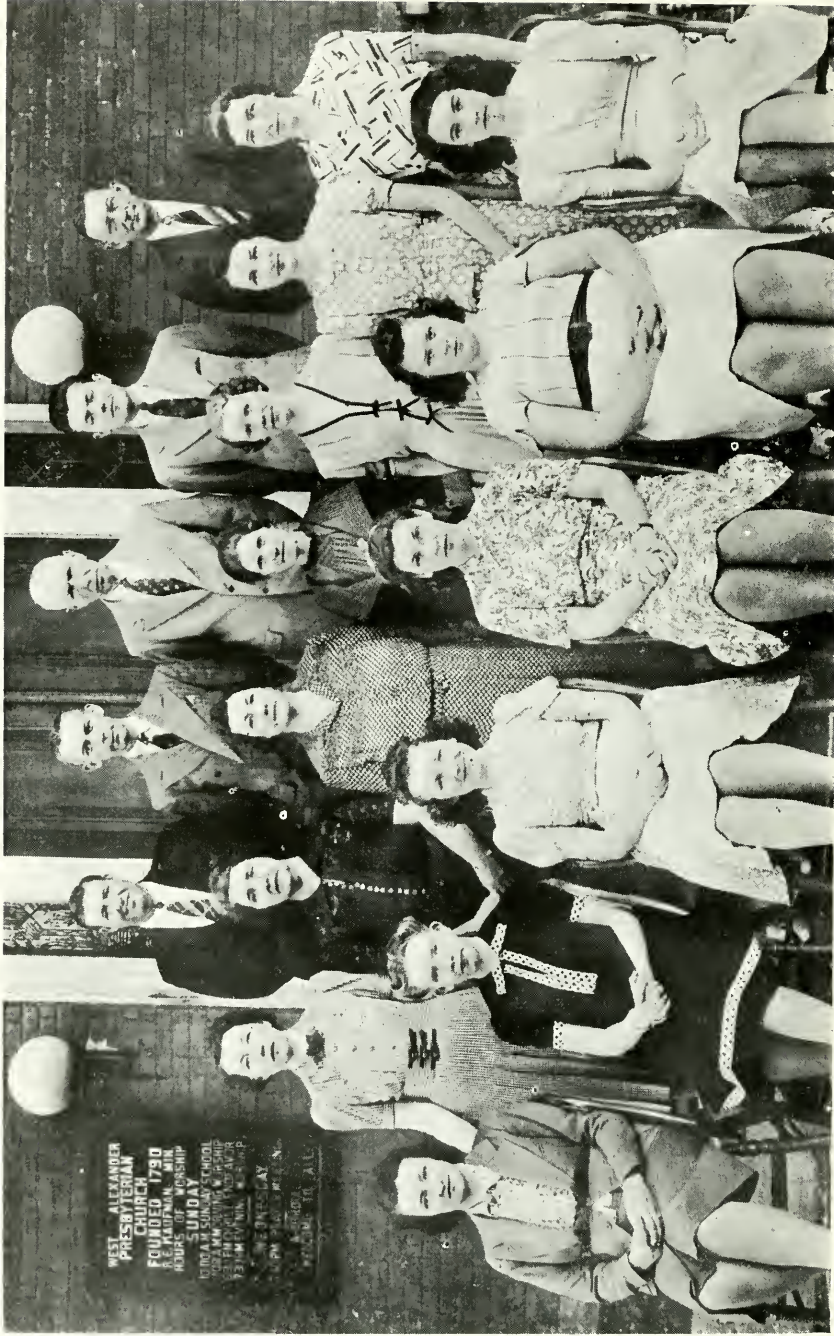
was not the congregation that elected him as pastor, only one of those who elected him remaining.) Dr. Fisher was promised a salary of \$1,100 per year. During his term the present manse was built. He found a strong church and people built upon sound Presbyterian traditions and doctrine. R. J. McCleery now became clerk of the session. (All the ministers of the church up to Dr. Fisher wrote the record of the session meeting themselves. The last entry of Dr. Lester was: "Received by confession of faith and Christian experience, Mrs. Homozellar S. Porter, Sept. 1900.") R. J. McCleery continued as clerk of the session until the rotary system of eldership was established in 1920. Mr. Fisher, following former methods, again districted the congregation among the elders and carefully and positively carried out the duties of his office. Mr. H. W. Kiskaddon, of Pittsburgh, a friend of Dr. Fisher, gave the church a Mason and Hamlin organ which was greatly appreciated. The worship in the sanctuary was aided by it. This organ served the church well until the present organ was installed.

In 1902 a Home Department was organized in the Sunday School. The Individual Communion Service was adopted in 1904. Missionary interest, which had been so well developed, continued, and the giving of the congregation greatly increased. Missionary minded leaders fostered the support of gospel missions throughout the land and in all fields of the rapidly growing Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. In 1902-3, \$2,326.00 were given to the various Church Boards as benevolence, the regular giving having been augmented by several legacies. The benevolent contributions of the first decade in this century increased steadily from \$1,000.00 in 1901 to \$1,500.00 in 1909. In that year Dr. Fisher was called to the Presbyterian Church in Omaha, Nebraska.

HOWELL M. EVANS' PASTORATE, 1910-1914

H. M. Evans was called to a congregation of 323 members. Also there were 56 on the roll of suspended members. This list consisted mostly of those who had moved away. At the congregational meeting that elected him a total of 238 votes were cast. This was the largest number of people ever voting in this church on candidates for the pulpit. Mr. Evans received 186 votes, the remaining ones were scattered among five others. The call was at once made unanimous on motion by Leroy Alexander. This voting indicates that while the membership was likely as large or even larger at other times, yet church attendance and support seemed to embrace a larger proportion of the people than has since been the case. 205 persons voted when Dr. Fisher was called. 151 voted when Mr. Evan's successor was chosen.

Rev. H. M. Evans ministered to a growing church. His salary was \$1,200 and manse. In Sept. 1910, it was agreed that the pastor should hold a week's meeting in school houses in different parts of the congregation. By the next year the membership increased to 346 and there was an increase in gifts.



WEST ALEXANDER
 PRESBYTERIAN
 CHURCH
 FOUNDED 1790
 R. KAUFMAN, MIN.
 HOURS OF WORSHIP
 10:00 A. M. SUNDAY SCHOOL
 10:30 A. M. MORNING WORSHIP
 7:30 P. M. SUNDAY EVENING
 8:30 P. M.
 THE WESLEY
 CHURCH
 W. W. W. W. W.
 W. W. W. W. W.

THE CHOIR: Charles Miller, James Hendrshot, F. W. Moore, Donald Dickinson, Ralph Ely, (Director)
 Margaret Moore, Mrs. Gertrude Davis, Mrs. Lucille Chalifant, Eudora Hunter, Margaret Hunter, Nancy Gibson, Mrs. Adda Gibson.
 Mary Hutchison, Moss, Mary Chalifant, Anna Spragg, Lorena Reed, Phyllis Donley.
 (Absent, Jean Flora Slater, Hazel Guess, Mrs. Gertrude Marker Heil, Organist.)

However, during the next two years the membership was reduced by removals, dismissals, and suspensions, so that when the next minister was called there was an active membership of about 280.

HENRY A. RIDDLE'S PASTORATE, 1915-1921

Some months elapsed after Mr. Evans' pastorate ended before the congregation called Dr. Riddle. The vote was unanimous and the new pastor took up the work in May, 1915. The congregation rallied quickly. During the next two years 90 were added to the church and the financial strength of the congregation improved. The effect of a European War was already being felt in all parts of the world. The first result was a quickening of interest in all kinds of business enterprises. Secondly, the churches were aroused and the strange force of propaganda first assumed world-wide proportions, invading every area of life, and greatly affecting the spiritual life of the churches in America. When America entered the World War in 1917, and many of the sons of this church entered the service of their country, solemn and serious thinking took hold on the congregation. Dr. Riddle felt the call to Y. M. C. A. service overseas and the congregation gave him leave of absence for duration of war at full salary. A committee secured supplies for the pulpit during the absence. The church held steady, and upon the return of Dr. Riddle rallied again and new members were received. The community in general was uplifted. Boy Scouts were organized. Rotary eldership was instituted, and the financial strength of the congregation raised gradually. It was a period of advance. The total budget in 1914 was about \$4,000.00, in 1921 it was \$8,000.00. In 1921 Dr. Henry A. Riddle was called to the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Greensburg.

GLENN M. CRAWFORD'S PASTORATE, 1921-1926

Dr. Glenn M. Crawford was called to a church that in the last decade had doubled its strength and was soon to approach the peak of its power financially.

The first clerk of the session after the rotary system was adopted was the late Thos. R. Bell. We was faithful and kept the sessional records well. He was followed in 1923, by John M. Gibsor who wrote the records in a clear, legible hand, easy to read. (This was quite a contrast to the writing of the early divines which requires painstaking effort to decipher.)

The new pastor found plenty to do and did it well. An interest in music developed and under the direction of the aged Mr. Wm. Todd, a member of the famous Todd Band, a new band was organized. A Sunday School orchestra flourished. The boys and girls were interested in the advantages of summer camps. Bulletins

were introduced. The Willing Workers were organized. Prayer meeting was well attended, and the general work prospered. Dr. Crawford preached eloquently and practically bringing all the force of the gospel to bear on the lives of the people. There was no great increase in membership, but the church was alive and prosperous and doing a great work in all departments. Dr. Crawford was called to the church at Jeannette in 1926.

G. KARL MONROE'S PASTORATE, 1927-1939

In May, 1927, Mr. Monroe assumed the pastorate. The church was ready to reach a high peak in financial strength. He found a membership of 350. The first year numbers were added and the roll carefully checked. 405 members were reported in 1928 and the total receipts reached \$11,000.00. The next year 448 members and a budget of over \$10,000.00 was raised. 288 were enrolled in the Sunday School.

Then came the well known depression that changed the financial picture of a nation and even the whole world. Every church in the country found itself suddenly face to face with difficult problems of keeping the usual work going, on greatly reduced funds. Many organizations collapsed and numerous churches had to close their doors. The full force of the loss came more gradually in the rural areas. Many people thought the recovery was "just around the corner." But as the months and years passed this hope faded out and faithful people who tried to keep up their benevolence out of savings, and depleted incomes, found at last they could keep it up no longer. So far as this church is concerned the low point seemingly was reached in 1933-1934. However, the recovery from that point has not been very great, but that it has been at all, testifies to the confidence and sacrifice of a people that are not easily subdued by adversity. By 1933-1934 the budget had decreased nearly fifty per cent. In 1929-1930 the report shows that the cost of the fine organ was met, the church expended that year nearly \$13,600.00. The highest point reached since the collapse of 1929 was in 1936 when over \$6,000.00 were raised.

Mr. Monroe, by hard, relentless, systematic work kept the church active and growing in the midst of these financial reverses. He organized all departments of the church according to the latest church educational methods. When the pressure of the depression was heaviest he met the situation with a spirit of sacrifice. The work of the church was his responsibility and he never shirked. From time to time new members were received. In 1930, 450 were reported and at the close of his ministry in 1939, 420. In his term of twelve years an Annual School of Missions was established and the Men's Brotherhood of West Alexander Community was organ-

ized. Early in 1939 Mr. Monroe was called to the First Presbyterian Church of Clairton, Pennsylvania.

SUMMARY

This Church comes to its 150th year with a rich experience of Christian living as its heritage. "Hard Times" have come and gone and come again through its history, but the gospel of saving grace has never failed to find here hearts willing to receive it and faithful witnesses ready to proclaim it. Each passing year young people rise up and put on the gospel armor, as those who have fought long and well, one by one, must lay it down. Nine faithful ministers have brought the church through 150 years of history—an average pastorate of nearly 17 years. Of differing gifts, each contributed richly to the life and work of the church.

THE CHURCH BUILDING

The present building is the fourth house of worship to stand at this place. The first was of unhewn logs, the second of hewn logs, which served the congregation until 1830. Then a brick church much like the present one was built, but a defective foundation rendered it unsafe and it was soon taken down. In 1840, just 100 year ago, the present church was built. The second church was heated by stoves. The first one had no provision for light or heat. Every innovation was resisted by someone. Some frowned in disapproval at the use of stoves in the house of God, as being some kind of a surrender to temptation. In the large log church at Raccoon, also founded by Dr. McMillan, when stoves were first used, one Sunday at worship, a woman seated near the stove fainted. She was carried out into the cool air by sympathetic friends, while others, no less willing, carried out the stove.

As the congregation comes to the 150th anniversary, the church building reaches its 100th year. Repairs and improvements from time to time helped the church to resist the wear and tear of the years. In times past the interior has been redecorated several times, the Sunday School room painted, and kitchen equipment provided. This Anniversary year the Willing Workers and the Trustees have had considerable work done to improve and preserve the church. The Sunday School rooms have been painted, floors covered with linoleum, the pews refinished, the sanctuary cleaned and walls painted, The outside painting done, the cupola neatly rebuilt and painted. All at a cost of approximately \$800.00.

The manse has also been improved. The third floor finished nicely, and the cellar floor concreted, and considerable papering and painting done. The improvement in third floor and cellar made by generosity of Dr. W. E. Hervey, many of whose ancestors were connected with this congregation, and whose sister, Mrs. Mary Hervey Black is now a member.

THE MARCH OF FAITH

Nineteen hundred years ago, in a land beyond the sea,
Our Savior gave a clear command to a little company
Of faithful simple-minded men that they go forth and preach
The gospel to all nations that they in turn might teach,-
"All things I have commanded you, and lo, unto the end
I will be with you always,"- a Counsellor and friend.

They began in old Jerusalem, though bitterly opposed;
And always new doors opened, when those behind them closed.
New hands held high the banner, when another's task was done,
And in spite of persecution, the gospel story won.
'And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me,'
So spake the Savior long ago,- the Man of Galilee.

Then from that small hill country the western trek began,
And messengers proclaimed the Word that passed from man to man.
Rough paths became a challenge, that challenged ever spurred
Them on to greater effort in the spreading of the Word.
'Tis ever thus when hardships come, men rise to meet the need
Become a stronger people, if sowing worthwhile seed.

'Twas so the gospel story was brought to our fair land
By a persecuted people,- a little Pilgrim band,
Who left a home and country, for a "stern and rockbound coast,"
Where they might worship freely the Lord and Holy Ghost.
Soon other peoples followed, of strong Scotch-Irish strain,
Resolved that they should keep the faith and liberty retain.

And with the passing of the years their everwidening sphere
Included the "Three Ridges" where the sturdy pioneer
Cut down the lofty forest trees and builded well his home,
To safe-guard both his family, and others who might come.
For through these hills were dangers to try the bravest heart,
And most of all was dreaded the red-skin with his dart.

But our fathers nothing daunted,-clearing lands and turning sod,
Building surely for the future needed now a house of God
Where all could come and worship, where the reading of the word,
Singing of the Psalms of David, and the preacher could be heard.
For the teaching of the children must be constant, day by day
That they evermore should follow in the straight and narrow way.

One Hundred-fifty years ago nearby where we now dwell,
A rude log house was builded and it served the purpose well.
It had no pews,- the seats were logs,-no light,- there was no heat,
Few comforts as we know them, but communion there was sweet.
For souls were brought into the fold, they came from far and near
And sat long hours to listen, the preacher's word to hear.

They brought along their Bibles and perhaps the Psalm book too,
And rifles for protection; that's the way they used to do.
If such dangers should beset us, would our courage be as strong?
Would we sit through two-hour sermons, would we praise the whole day long?
And those hoary headed fathers, whose teaching is so plain,
Who suffered many hardships,-has their toiling been in vain?

And as "Three Ridges" prospered, congregations grew apace
Another house was builded for a people "saved by grace."
Then another and another, this, our church was built to last,
It was built in Eighteen Forty, and a century has passed.
Yet it stands both staunch and sturdy, serving still a faithful band,
Telling of a home eternal- mansion fair, not made with hand.

A goodly heritage is ours and shall we each endeavor
To pass the light to other hands, that it shine on forever.
For nineteen hundred years ago, in a land beyond the sea,
The Savior gave a clear command, to a little company.
To tell the gospel story. The world needs this today.
Let us, as Christians, take our place, to work, to watch, to pray.

Written for 150th Anniversary by Mrs. Amy Dunlap Blayney

OLD ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

1. A Temperance Society was organized in the 1840's by John McCluskey.

2. The Loring Circle was organized by Miss Loring, a Syrian missionary, in March 1878. The first officers were: President, Mary Truesdell; Vice President, Jennie Ely; Secretary, Lizzie Mayes; Treasurer, Kate Fulton. The purpose of the society was to work for women and girls in foreign lands. This organization grew and did a notable piece of work, being for many years one of the strongest women's societies in the Presbytery. It was absorbed into other missionary organizations in 1930.

3. The Hold-The-Fort-Band was organized by Mrs. Elizabeth Lester April 13, 1878. It was an organization of boys and girls and the successor of the Orion Band, an organization for young ladies that began in 1872. The purpose of it was to influence young people in benevolent work. The dues were "A penny a week and as much more as you can earn or spend." The Hold-The-Fort-Band was the forerunner of the Elizabeth Lester Light Bearers.

4. "The Rural Mite Society" was organized in the early 70's by three families: Todds, McCleerys and Armstrongs. The purpose was to improve the social life of the young people. They raised certain monies which they used for special projects. For a number of years a scholarship was provided in a Negro school. They also helped the church and bought the first cooking stove for the church kitchen, also certain maps for classes. The organization died out in the early 80's. About that time the same families organized the Neighborhood Prayer Meetings which had a great influence for some years.

SOME ORGANIZED CLASSES THAT DO NOT EXIST TODAY

1. The Willing Listeners, organized in June, 1912, with H. M. Evans as teacher. This was a mixed adult Bible class with about 40 charter members.

2. A Young Men's Bible Class was organized in June, 1909. The teacher was Mrs. Grant E. Fisher. There were about 20 charter members.

3. The Bereans, a men's class, was organized Sept. 28, 1914. H. T. Stout was the teacher. There were ten charter members.

4. There was also an organized class in the young people's division called the "Delta Alpha" class. It was in existence in 1916

THE SABBATH SCHOOL TODAY

Historically the Sunday School was organized in the year 1820, when Joseph Stevenson was pastor. One of the first directors was elder John McDonald, whose son, Rev. Goerge McDonald, wrote the account of the Sunday School in the history published by the congregation at the One Hundredth Anniversary. At first the session seemed to be in control. In 1869 Joel Truesdell was elected superintendent. This office he held for many years. In 1908

Thos. R. Bell was elected and served faithfully for 22 years. He was followed in recent years by T. E. Egan, J. Roy Sutherland, and W. E. Stoolfire, who is general superintendent today.

At the beginning of Mr. Monroe's pastorate the Sunday School was carefully organized into departments. The young people's division was made more distinctive. For many years prior to 1890 there had been an "Infant Department," it is not known just when this became the "Primary Department," but it has been so for many years. The superintendent now is Miss Margaret Moore.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT, Superintendent, Margery Coffield. This Department introduced in 1928-1929 includes the young people from the age of nine up through twenty-three. This division of the Sunday School has its own Worship Service, and is in charge of a full set of officers. There are six classes in the Department, each consisting of a certain age group and having patient and faithful teachers. The success of this Department is due in large part to the faithful, skillful leadership and splendid example in Christian living of Mrs. G. K. Monroe. The present officers are: Superintendent, Margery Coffield; Secretary, Elizabeth Reed; Treasurer, Junior Struzka.

ADULT DEPARTMENT

This year John Bullard succeeded W. W. Armstrong as Adult Superintendent. Mr. Armstrong has a long record of faithful service to the church and Sunday School. This Department conducts its own Worship Service and at regular times Missionary and Temperance instruction is given in connection with this Service. The entire Department is organized into classes as follows:

1. **THE FLORA EGAN BIBLE CLASS** organized in April, 1910, with 35 charter members. The first teacher was Mrs. Flora Moss Egan. The first officers: President, Virginia Gibson; Vice President, Helen Anderson; Secretary, Beatrice Carrol; Treasurer, Edna Chaney. Substitute teacher, Mrs. Maude Dunlap. This class has always responded generously in helping the needy, giving food, clothing, and medicines. Also helping the church by giving to special offerings, buying articles for the church kitchen, and providing teachers in other departments of the school. In 1932 the much beloved teacher, Mrs. Flora Egan passed away. The class which began as the **EXCELSIOR CLASS** now changed its name in her memory to the **FLORA EGAN BIBLE CLASS**. Flora Armstrong Moss was selected as teacher. In December, 1939, she, too, was called Home. One of her last works as teacher was to help the class organize a Sunday School at Coon Island. There are now 39 members. Mrs. Lucille Blayney Chalfant is President. Secretary-Treasurer is Mrs. Sara Craver Spragg. Teacher, Mrs. Grace Chaney. The motto: "God's will to know, God's will to do, God's will to love."

2. **NON NOBIS CLASS** organized in April, 1913, with 12 members. The first officers were: President, Mrs. B. B. Chaney; Vice

President, Mrs. Clara Strauss; Secretary, Mrs. F. W. McConn; Treasurer, Miss Ellen Taylor. The motto of the class is: "Be Ye Steadfast." The class has lived up to this purpose. The membership increased to 22. It has supplied teachers for the Sunday School. Also has helped the needy and sent baskets of food with messages of good cheer at Christmas season, as one of its projects. Helped liberally in special offerings, bought one communion plate and gave special gifts.. Present officers: President, Miss Cora Reed; Vice President, Mrs. Carrie Coffield; Secretary, Mrs. Jessie McCleery; Treasurer, Mrs. Lizzie McNinch. The class today still has its first and only teacher, Mrs. Carson Reed.

3. THE DORCAS CLASS organized in May, 1913, by Mrs. H. H. McDonald with 12 charter members. Motto: "We are in the King's Business." First officers: President, Mrs. J. H. Dunlap; Vice President, Mrs. E. E. Blayney; Secretary, Mary Craig; Treasurer, Mrs. R. R. Roney. The class has faithfully followed out various missionary projects and worthy causes of the church. In 1939 the class presented to the church a memorial tablet in honor of Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Lester. The present officers are: President, Mrs. A. M. Struzka; Vice President, Mrs. J. R. McNinch; Secretary, Mary Craig; Treasurer, Mrs. Julia Egan. The teachers are Miss Essie Lester and Mrs. Anna Sutherland.

4. THE TRYPHENA AND TRYPHOSA CLASS, (Romans 16:12) organized in July, 1910, with 16 charter members. The first teacher was Mrs. Jacob Ruble; the second was Mrs. Jennie Link Berry and the third and present teacher, Mrs. Nannie Armstrong. The first officers were: Mrs. Jennie Link, Mrs. John Allum, Mrs. Will McNinch, and Mrs. Ella Ernest. The motto is: "Looking Forward." and the aim written in the constitution of the class is: "Bible study, Christian culture, soul winning, mutual helpfulness, and the extension of Christ's Kingdom throughout the world." Present officers are: Mrs. Rachel McKain, Mrs. Susie Craig, and Mrs. Will Blayney.

5. MEN'S BIBLE CLASS was organized in 1916 under the name "Whitham's Willing Workers." The teacher was W. E. Whitham. There were 12 charter members. This class was known after the loss of the first teacher as the "Men's Bible Class" and was taught by the pastor. At one time it had a very large membership. In recent years the membership has fallen off, but it has done and is doing a notable work. There will always be room for a Men's Class in every Sunday School. The teacher today is D. W. Coffield.

6. FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CLASS organized April 7, 1940, with 7 charter members. The enrollment soon reached 21. The officers selected are: President, Willard Harris; Vice President, Jas. Hendershot; Secretary-Treasurer, Ruth Bullard. The aim of the class is to promote, encourage, and back any project which is for the good of the church and community. Its purpose is to provide a class in the Sunday School for young adults between

the ages of 25 and 50. This class has already rendered some service, its members helping materially in the repairs done to the church. The pastor teaches this class at present.

MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS

1. THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY organized in 1871 with Mrs. Sarah Ewing as President; Mrs. Jas. F. Blayney, Vice President; Mrs. W. H. Lester, Secretary; and Mrs. Jennie Pollock, Treasurer. The first year there were 107 members enrolled. There was a charter membership of about 24. This society has a long record of real missionary work in prayer and offerings. In its nearly sixty years of existence it has contributed approximately \$19,000.00 to the cause of missions, both Home and Foreign. The largest contributing membership was 153 in 1884. The officers today are: President, Mrs. C. W. Sprowls; Vice President, Miss Essie Lester; Secretary, Mrs. R. D. McCleery; Treasurer, Mrs. B. Yates.

2. WESTMINSTER MISSIONARY SOCIETY was organized April 7, 1921. The sponsors were Mrs. H. A. Riddle and Mrs. T. E. Egan. The officers were: Miss Helen Anderson, President; Miss Mary Lamb, Vice President; Mrs. Dorothy Edgar, Secretary; Miss Hazel Guess, Treasurer. The membership has grown to 37. During the 19 years of its activity approximately \$1,600.00 has been given to missions. In addition Christmas boxes have been sent and hospital sewing has been done. Miss Mary Caldwell, of this society, has taught in the south as a missionary. The present officers are: President, Miss Margaret Moore; Vice President, Mrs. John C. Bullard; Secretary, Mrs. Geo. Donley; Treasurer, Mrs. W. R. Vermillion.

3. WORLD FRIENDSHIP organized October 26, 1928, by the Senior girls Sunday School Class taught by Mrs. J. B. Chambers, for the purpose of studying and giving to missionary work. A committee from the W.M. S. composed of Mrs. Anna Sutherland, Mrs. W. M. Caldwell, and Mrs. J. B. Chambers, assisted by Mrs. G. K. Monroe, helped the class form the organization. The first officers were: Miss Mabel Coffield, Adalyn Reed, and Rhea Guy. The attendance has varied from four to twenty-four. They are under the supervision of the W.M.S. and have an adult as a leader. Their present officers are Mary Martha Chalfant and Lorena Reed.

5. ELIZABETH LESTER LIGHT BEARERS in the continuing organization that began with the formation of the Hold-The-Fort Band in 1878. After the death of Mrs. W. H. Lester in 1898, the name was changed in honor of her, as above. In the beginning there were fifty or sixty members. Since division has been made in the society the membership is about twenty-five. The Leaders are Mrs. Emmett Gibson and Mrs. Jas. Hendershot. They meet once a month at the time of Junior Church.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

1. JUNIOR CHURCH which also serves as Junior Christian Endeavor was organized in 1930. This group meets each Sunday at 11:30 during the Church Service. The children are taught Bible Stories, memory work, etc. This year five of the Juniors received County Certificates for completing certain requirements in study courses and memory work. Leader is Margery Coffield.

2. CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR. The oldest youth organization to meet regularly Sunday evenings seems to have been the Westminster League, which existed first in the 80's. During the pastorate of Dr. Fisher the name Christian Endeavor was used, and the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor held meetings each Sunday evening. This Society flourished greatly at times. All the people joined heartily in the support of this meeting and at times large crowds completely filled the large room. Then it was thought the young people could do better by themselves and older folks no longer attended. As a result, interest dropped and the inspiration of large attendance was gone. However, many of the young people accepted the added responsibility and the Sunday evening meetings continued. In 1930 the young people were organized according to age groups: The Juniors, the Pioneers, and the Young People. The name, Christian Endeavor, applied to the oldest of these groups more particularly. The Pioneers as a society of young people continues to flourish and meet each Sunday evening. The enrollment is about thirty. Adult leaders direct the activity.

3. THE CHOIR. A choir existed in the church from early times. Through the years it has rendered invaluable aid and direction to congregational singing, as well as contributing special choral numbers to the Worship Service. It has had notable leaders throughout its history. Instruments of music were used to their best purpose, and since the day of the organ, music is more than ever a desirable feature of the worship. The choir director is Ralph Ely. Mrs. Forrest Heil is the organist.

4. THE WILLING WORKERS. An organization of the women of the church, formed in 1922 by Rev. Glenn M. Crawford. Object: To aid in keeping up the church and manse, and along all lines to promote the welfare of the congregation. Recent activities include repairs to church and manse, helping to pay for church bulletins, church music, etc. The first officers were: Mrs. Jos. Moss, Mrs. T. R. Bell, Miss Mary Craig, and Mrs. Wm. Berry. Today the officers are: Mrs. Jas. Hendershot, Mrs. Arch Bullard, Miss Margaret Murray, and Mrs. John Chaney. The enrollment is 150.

The General Committee on the One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration

T. E. Egan	R. E. Kaufman	John Bullard
W. E. Stoolfire	F. W. Moore	Margery Coffield
O. G. Masteller		Mrs. J. E. Martin

Advisory Members

Miss Essie Lester	R. D. McCleery	R. G. Buchanan
Mrs. Emma Moore	W. W. Armstrong	R. J. McCleery

ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

Wednesday, July 17—7:30—"A Lesson in History"

History of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
 Lecture with slides prepared for World's Fair in Chicago.
 Devotional Service Edward Egan, Jr.

Thursday, July 18—10:30 A. M.

Organ Recital Mrs. Gertrude Marker Heil
 Devotional Rev. Jacob C. Ruble
 Recognition of oldest members
 Greetings from sons of the church, Presbytery, the Presbyterian Society and others.
 Address Dr. W. W. McKinney, Moderator of Synod of Pa.
 Brief service at the grave of John Brice and at the Oak Tree Marker in charge of Dr. C. H. McDonald.
 Noon—Lunch served by the Willing Workers Organization.
 Organ Recital—2:00 P. M. Mrs. Gertrude Marker Heil
 Devotional Service Rev. R. E. Kaufman
 Anthem: "The Glory of God" Heyser
 Address Dr. H. A. Riddle, Ex-Moderator of Synod of Pa.
 Note: A photographer will be present to take a picture of the entire assembly

Friday, July 19—7:30 P. M.

Organ Recital Mrs. Gertrude Marker Heil
 Anthem: "The Light and Life Immortal" Wilson
 Historical Address Dr. C. H. McDonald
 History Rev. R. E. Kaufman

Sunday, July 21—11:00 A.M.—Communion Service

Anthem: "The Sweet Story of Old" Adams
 Solo Mrs. Caroline Weisgerber O'Hara
 Sermon Dr. W. P. Shriver, Grandson of Dr. John McCluskey

Sunday, July 21—7:30 P. M.

Organ Recital Mrs. Gertrude Marker Heil
 Anthem: "The Light of Day" Meredith
 Address Dr. W. D. Mercer
 "A Final Word" Rev. R. E. Kaufman

A List of the Pastors and Ruling Elders, 1790-1940
PASTORS

John Brice installed in April 1790: released 1809
 Joseph Stevenson installed in June 1809: released 1825
 John McCluskey installed in Oct. 1828: released 1854
 William H. Lester installed Oct. 1854: released 1900
 (Pastor emeritus 1900-19 2)
 Grant E. Fisher installed 1900: released 1909
 Howell M. Evans installed 1910: released 1914
 Henry A. Riddle installed 1915: released 1921
 Glenn M. Crawford installed 1921; released 1926
 G. Karl Monroe installed 1927: released 1939
 Ralph E. Kaufman installed 1939:

RULING ELDERS (and date of ordination)

1790	1854	1921
John McPherrin	Hugh Armstrong	*Carson Reed
John Maxwell	Joseph Carson	*John M. Gibson
John Waits	John Reed	Leroy Marsh
John Faris	Byers T. Yates	*W. R. Hamilton
		**W. H. Hutchison
1800	1858	1922
John Henry	John C. Hervey	*R. D. McCleery
Geo. Sutherland		**Carson Blayney
Silas Coe		**J. Elmer Gray
William Scott		
George Lee		
1813	1869	1924
James MacCammont	John Reed, II	*John H. Chaney
Moses Hull	Alexander McCleery	*W. W. Armstrong
William Gaston	Jas. F. Blayney	
John Millar	R. Milton Maxwell	**T. E. Egan
Thomas Yates	Thomas G. Yates	
	David S. Eagleson,	
	M. D.	H. H. Lamb
1819	1880	1925
Thomas Yates	John Reed, II	*F. W. Moore
William Hervey	Alexander McCleery	
	Jas. F. Blayney	
	R. Milton Maxwell	
	Thomas G. Yates	
	David S. Eagleson,	
	M. D.	
1828	1896	1927
John Pollock	Samuel Pollock	H. H. Lamb
John McDonald	W. F. Whitham	
Samuel Oldham	*R. J. McCleery	
Andrew Yates	S. A. Craig, M. D.	
John Cunningham	W. S. Armstrong	
Geo. Sutherland, II		
Thomas Maxwell		
1847	1901	1928
Barnet Bonar	D. W. Rasel	*F. W. Moore
James Gaston	W. L. Blayney	
James Todd	Nicholas Murray	
Henry Hervey	*R. G. Buchanan	
	*W. M. Caldwell	
1920	1932	1929
William Berry	*J. Roy Sutherland	*John Hanna
**D. W. Coffield		
T. R. Bell		
*H. L. McCammon		
1932	1933	1932
**Ralph McCleery	*Robt. J. Hunter	*John Hanna
1940	1935	1932
*John Bullard	**Waldo E. Stoolfire	*J. Roy Sutherland
*John Hunter		

** Indicates present session 1940 * Indicates present eldership - 1940

1785 — 1936

SITE OF OAK TREE UNDER WHICH
THE FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICES
WERE HELD IN COMMUNITY
BY THE CONGREGATION
OF THREE RIDGES (LATER THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
WEST ALEXANDER) BY DR. JOHN
MCMILLEN, REV. JOHN BRICE AND
OTHERS AS EARLY AS 1785.

